



U.S. Department of Homeland Security
UNITED STATES SECRET SERVICE

Washington, D.C. 20223

March 7, 2005

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.
Ranking Member
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on the Judiciary
Washington, D.C. 20515-6216

The Honorable Louise Slaughter
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-3228

Dear Mr. Conyers and Ms. Slaughter:

Your letter of February 10, 2005, to Director Basham inquiring about procedures used to clear individuals seeking to participate in White House briefings was forwarded to my office for reply. As the Secret Service is responsible solely for the security of the White House complex, I will focus my reply on those issues you raised that pertain to security measures implemented by this agency.

Please be advised that our Office of Protective Operations has looked into this matter and has determined that there was no deviation from Secret Service standards and procedures as your letter suggests. Mr. Guckert provided the Secret Service with his legal name, rather than his "pen name," and was assessed using the same criteria applied to all individuals seeking access to White House briefings.

In determining who is afforded access, federal regulations provide that the Secret Service "will be guided solely by the principle of whether the applicant presents a potential source of physical danger to the President and/or the family of the President so serious as to justify his or her exclusion from White House press privileges." 31 C.F.R. 409.1 (2005). Secret Service screening procedures at the White House are tailored to meet this requirement.

Finally, we would note that members of the press who are afforded access to the White House may utilize professional names that differ from their legal names. The Secret Service, however, requires that legal names be provided to enable the screening processes to work effectively.

I hope that this information addresses your concerns.

Sincerely

Conrad A. Everett
Deputy Assistant Director